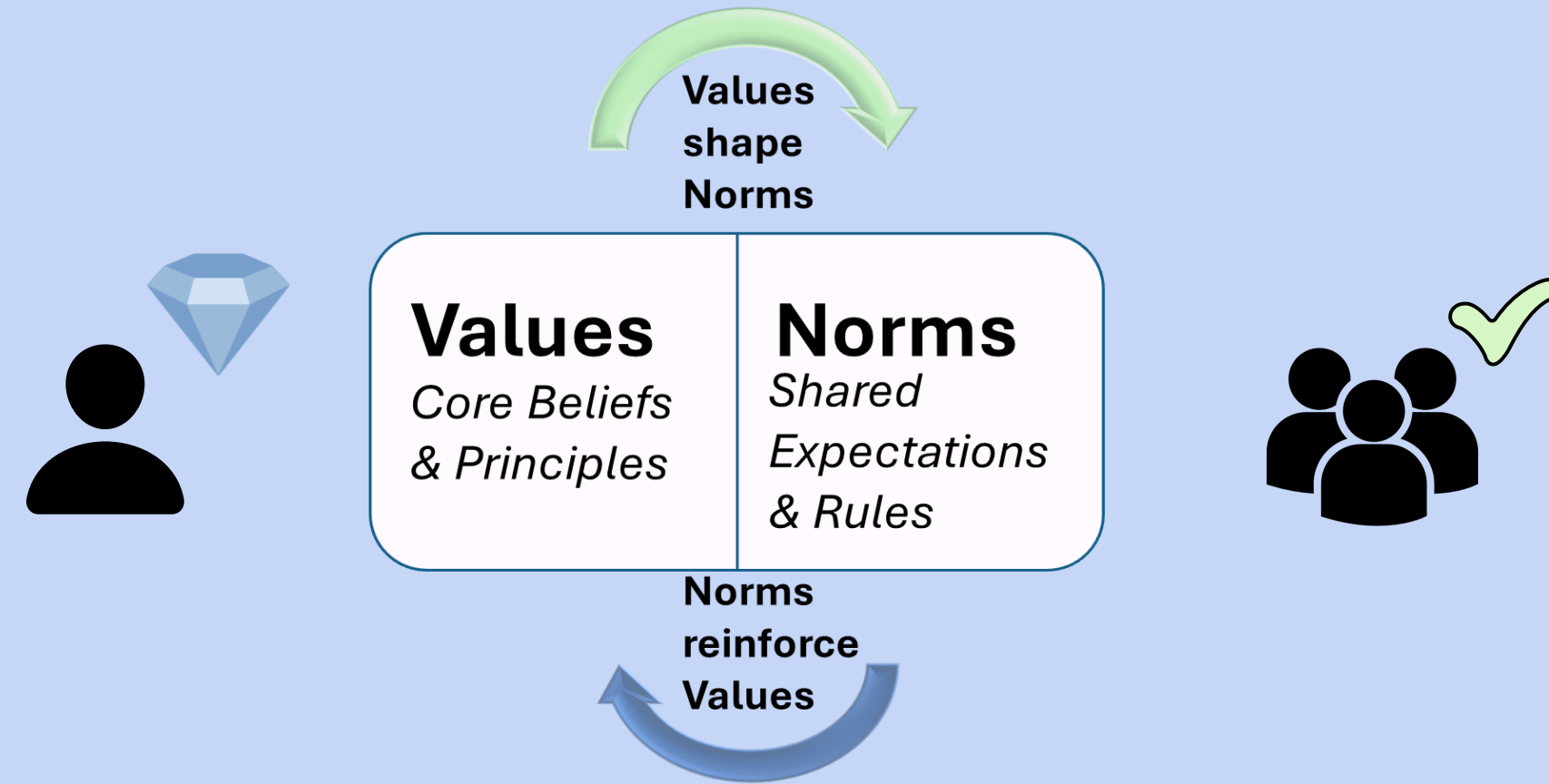


Climate Solutions in a Value-driven World

Why Values Matter in Change and Resilience

Understanding Values

Values are the core beliefs and principles that guide what individuals and societies consider important, such as stewardship, fairness, or prosperity¹



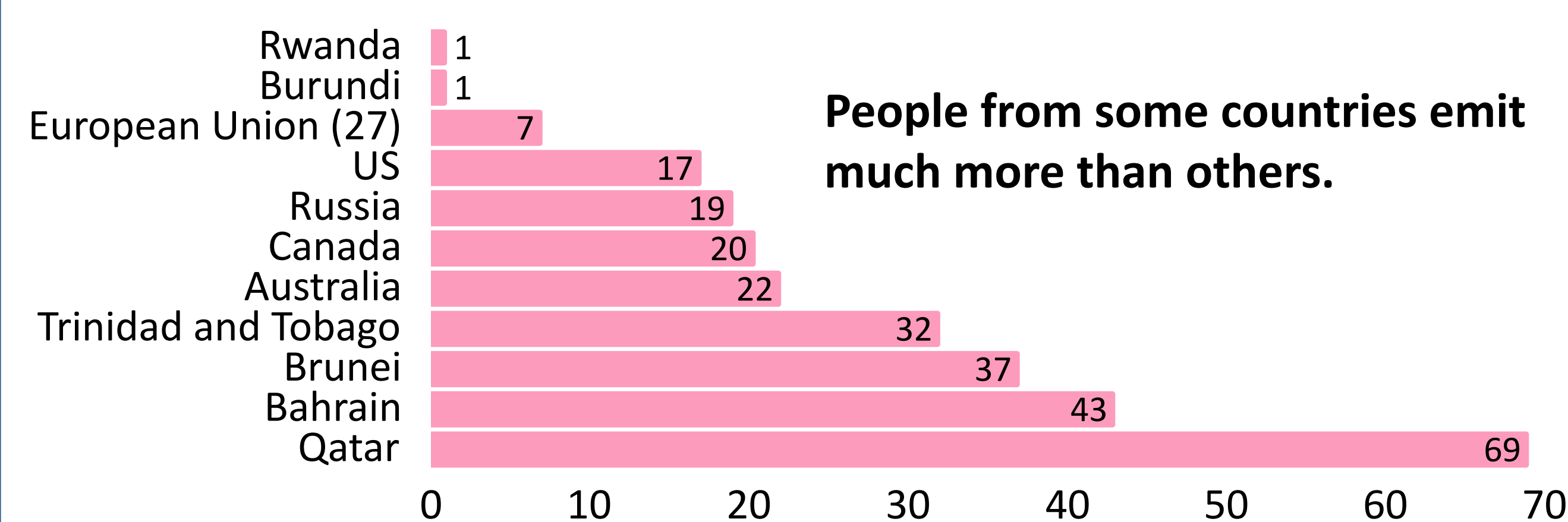
... and Norms

Norms are the unwritten rules and shared expectations that shape how people behave within a group or society, defining what is seen as acceptable, desirable, or typical¹

Values in the Shift to Sustainable Societies

Climate change-related values, norms, and beliefs do influence climate-relevant behaviour^{5,9}, but:

Climate-friendly values don't always mean climate-friendly action



People from some countries emit much more than others.

... less when you are rich (study in Finland): However, food is an exception: climate friendly people eat climate friendly food, even if they are wealthy¹⁰

... less in societies with higher level of distrust, belief in external control¹¹

Social Norms can hold back Climate Action

Unsustainable values are often the norm¹² → hard to change¹³

Also: People underestimate how climate-friendly others think.^{14,15,16,17}

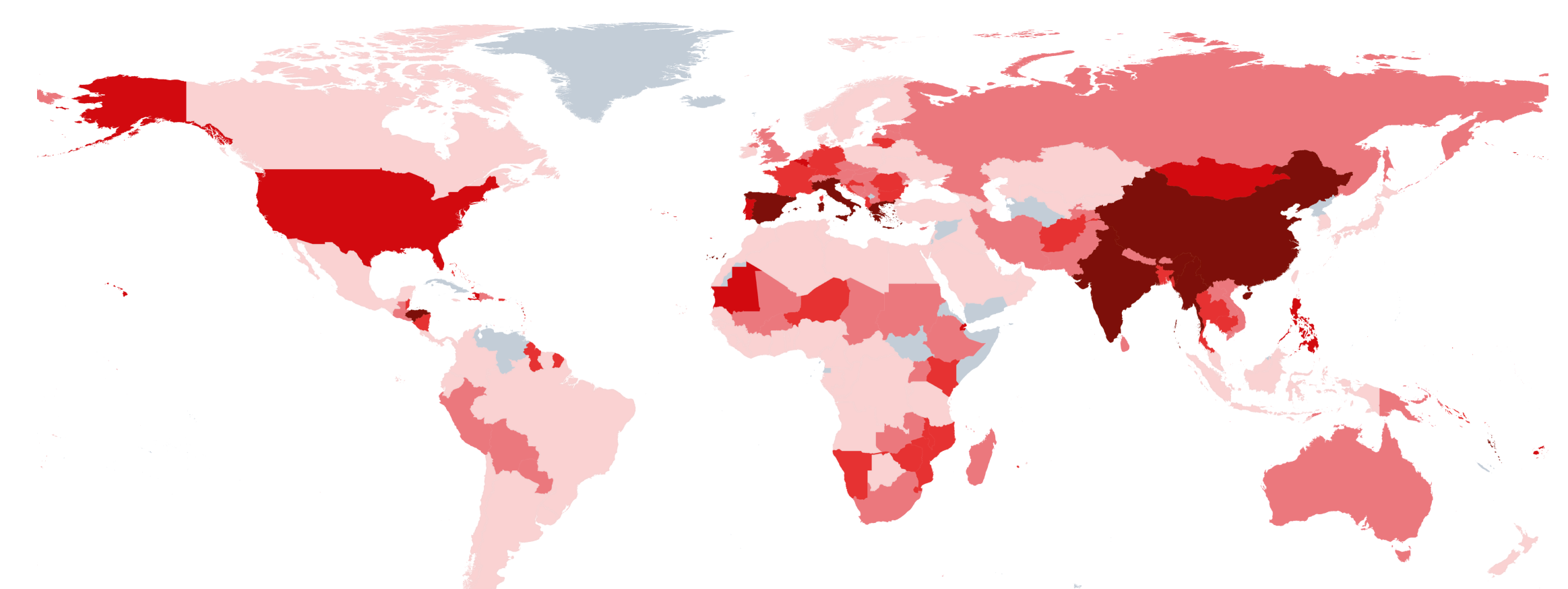


No one cares, so I won't bring it up.

Values in Climate Adaptation

Adaptation is most urgent where climate risk is high

Climate Risks already seen 1993 - 2022²



High Climate Risk (severe effects on humans and economy)
 Moderate Risk (Moderately affected and better adaptive capacity)
 Less affected due to stronger infrastructure, higher income or fewer natural disasters

Values are important in the "how" of adaptation

They influence which adaptation approaches people find appropriate^{3,4}
 e.g. in an indigenous community in Labrador, Canada, some oppose a proposed road—valuing tradition—while others support it for greater mobility and freedom as snowmobile travel becomes less reliable due to warmer winters³

They can limit adaptation⁵

For instance, some societies won't consider restricting free speech or modifying property rights—even if those changes might benefit collective outcomes like climate adaptation⁶

They often go unnoticed⁷

Especially values of the majority or people in power will get unnoticed or seen as "objective truths"

Social Norms Strategies against Climate Change

Correct Misperceptions

If people realize that most people think climate-friendly, they will talk more about these values and facilitate change!^{15,12}



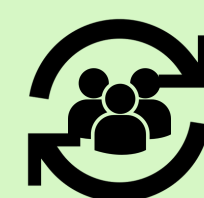
Seed new norms

Change often starts with a small group. Once it reaches a critical mass a *social tipping point* is reached and the norms change¹²



Show that norms are changing

If people see that the values of others change, then those "dynamic norms" can motivate followers, even if the norms are not yet widespread^{12,18}



Work together towards shared goal

Even if people don't initially share the goal of climate-friendly behaviour, the notion of working together towards a shared goal can motivate to move along¹³



Values should be considered in climate adaptation

Positive examples: the Swinomish people in Washington defined cultural criteria for rating wetlands. Now, wetlands with high cultural value are protected⁸

In the past, values have been systematically disregarded in climate adaptation or mitigation. However, things are changing! Moving forward, we should consider values in climate adaptation. And using the right strategies, social norms can become sustainable, too!

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Want another angle? Listen to our 3-minute podcast: "Whose Values Count?" featuring the Swinomish people and the role of climate justice

